

# the condition of education 2005



## INDICATOR 5

### Language Minority School-Age Children

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2005*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2005*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.sap?pubid=2005094>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

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# Elementary/Secondary Education

## Language Minority School-Age Children

*The number of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home more than doubled between 1979 and 2003.*

Between 1979 and 2003, the number of school-age children (ages 5–17) who spoke a language other than English at home grew from 3.8 million to 9.9 million, or from 9 percent to 19 percent of all children in the age group (see supplemental table 5-1). The number of those children who spoke English with difficulty (i.e., spoke English less than “very well”) also grew, from 1.3 million (or 3 percent of all 5- to 17-year-olds) in 1979 to 2.9 million (or 5 percent) in 2003.

From 1979 to 2003, the population of school-age children increased by 19 percent. In contrast, during this period, the number of such children who spoke a language other than English at home increased by 161 percent, and the number who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty increased by 124 percent.

Of those school-age children who spoke a language other than English at home, 29 percent spoke English with difficulty in 2003, a decline from 34 percent in 1979. Spanish was the language most frequently spoken at home by those in homes where English was not the primary

language among both those who spoke English very well and who spoke English with difficulty (see supplemental table 5-2).

The percentages of school-age children living in an English-speaking household varied by region, citizenship, and race/ethnicity in 2003. In the West, children who spoke a language other than English at home made up 31 percent of all school-age children, compared with 19 percent in the Northeast, 16 percent in the Midwest, and 10 percent in the South. School-age children who were not U.S. citizens were more likely than U.S.-born and naturalized citizens to speak a language other than English at home, and naturalized citizens were more likely than U.S.-born children to do so. Five percent of both Black and White school-age children spoke a language other than English at home, compared with 19 percent of American Indian, 65 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander, and 68 percent of Hispanic children. In addition, 1 percent of White and Black school-age children spoke a language other than English at home and had difficulty speaking English, compared with 18 percent of Asian/Pacific Islander and 21 percent of Hispanic children.

NOTE: Respondents were asked if each child in the household spoke a language other than English at home. If they answered “yes,” they were asked how well each could speak English. Categories used for reporting were “very well,” “well,” “not well,” and “not at all.” All those who reported speaking English less than “very well” were considered to have difficulty speaking English. In 1994, the survey methodology for the Current Population Survey (CPS) was changed and weights were adjusted. Spanish-language versions of both the CPS and the American Community Survey (ACS) were available to respondents. For more information on the CPS, see supplemental note 2, and for more information on the ACS, see supplemental note 3.

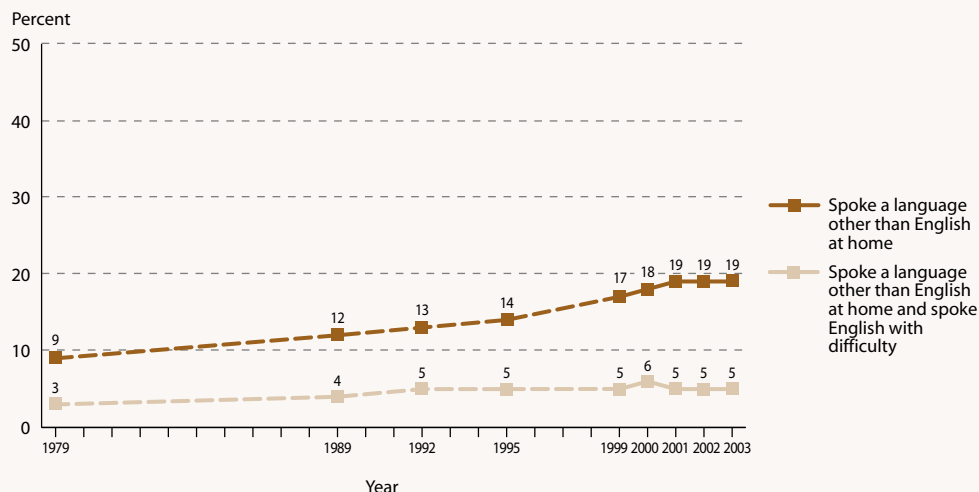
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–2003, previously unpublished tabulation (January 2005).

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Supplemental Notes 1, 2, 3  
Supplemental Tables 5-1, 5-2  
NCES 2004–009  
Federal Interagency Forum  
on Child and Family Statistics  
forthcoming



**LANGUAGE MINORITY: Percentage of 5- to 17-year-olds who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2003**



## Language Minority School-Age Children

**Table 5-1. Number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2003**

Year	Total population ages 5–17 (in millions)	Spoke a language other than English at home		Spoke English with difficulty <sup>1</sup>		
		Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Percent of those who spoke a language other than English at home
1979	44.7	3.8	8.5	1.3	2.8	34.2
1989	42.3	5.2	12.3	1.8	4.3	34.6
1992	47.7	6.3	13.2	2.2	4.6	34.9
1995	47.5	6.7	14.1	2.4	5.2	35.8
1999	52.7	8.8	16.7	2.6	5.0	29.5
2000	52.5	9.5	18.1	2.9	5.5	30.5
2001	53.0	9.8	18.5	2.8	5.4	28.6
2002	53.0	9.8	18.5	2.8	5.3	28.6
2003	53.0	9.9	18.7	2.9	5.5	29.4
Percentage change compared with 1979						
1979	†	†	†	†	†	†
1989	-5.4	36.8	44.7	38.5	53.6	1.2
1992	6.8	65.8	55.3	69.2	64.3	2.1
1995	6.3	76.3	65.9	84.6	85.7	4.7
1999	17.9	131.6	96.5	100.0	78.6	-13.6
2000	17.4	150.0	112.9	123.1	96.4	-10.8
2001	18.5	157.9	117.6	115.4	92.9	-16.5
2002	18.5	157.9	117.6	115.4	89.3	-16.5
2003	18.6	160.8	119.9	124.3	96.4	-14.0

† Not applicable.

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked if each child in the household spoke a language other than English at home. If they answered “yes,” they were asked how well each could speak English. Categories used for reporting were “very well,” “well,” “not well,” and “not at all.” All those who reported speaking English less than “very well” were considered to have difficulty speaking English.

NOTE: Spanish-language versions of both the Current Population Survey (CPS) and the American Community Survey (ACS) were available to respondents. In 1994, the survey methodology for the CPS was changed and weights were adjusted. For more information on the CPS, see *supplemental note 2*, and for more information on the ACS, see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–2003, previously unpublished tabulation (January 2005).

## Language Minority School-Age Children

**Table 5-2. Number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty, by selected characteristics: 2003**

[In thousands]									
Characteristic	Number	Spoke a language other than English at home		Spoke English with difficulty <sup>1</sup>					
		Number	Percent of population <sup>2</sup>	Total		Ages 5–9		Ages 10–17	
				Number	Percent of population <sup>2</sup>	Number	Percent of population <sup>2</sup>	Number	Percent of population <sup>2</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,023</b>	<b>9,911</b>	<b>18.7</b>	<b>2,915</b>	<b>5.5</b>	<b>1,431</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>1,485</b>	<b>4.5</b>
Language spoken at home									
Spanish	7,070	7,070	100.0	2,180	30.8	1,103	39.9	1,078	25.0
Other Indo-European	1,107	1,107	100.0	283	25.6	116	30.7	167	22.9
Asian/Pacific Islander <sup>3</sup>	1,566	1,566	100.0	428	27.3	200	34.3	229	23.2
Other	126	126	100.0	16	12.8	7	15.8	9	11.1
Race/ethnicity <sup>4</sup>									
American Indian	413	78	18.8	10	2.4	4	2.6	6	2.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,904	1,232	64.7	347	18.2	166	23.2	181	15.2
Black	7,835	404	5.2	105	1.3	37	1.3	68	1.4
White	32,008	1,648	5.1	436	1.4	159	1.4	277	1.4
Hispanic	9,413	6,367	67.6	1,980	21.0	1,049	27.3	932	16.7
Mexican	6,417	4,446	69.3	1,490	23.2	820	30.9	669	17.8
Puerto Rican	920	505	54.9	97	10.5	41	11.3	55	10.0
Cuban	203	144	71.0	30	14.7	17	22.0	13	10.3
Central or South American	1,137	947	83.3	288	25.3	133	29.4	155	22.7
Other	736	325	44.2	76	10.4	37	12.4	39	9.0
Citizenship <sup>5</sup>									
U.S.-born	50,367	7,665	15.2	1,899	3.8	1,060	5.6	839	2.7
Naturalized U.S. citizen	461	293	63.6	74	16.1	16	18.0	58	15.6
Non-U.S. citizen	2,194	1,953	89.0	942	42.9	355	54.6	588	38.0
Poverty status <sup>6</sup>									
Poor	7,944	2,283	28.7	871	11.0	450	13.7	422	9.0
Near poor	11,064	3,049	27.6	968	8.8	497	11.4	471	7.0
Nonpoor	32,506	4,270	13.1	952	2.9	423	3.7	529	2.5
Region									
Northeast	9,422	1,792	19.0	523	5.5	231	6.6	291	4.9
Midwest	19,032	3,032	15.9	909	4.8	447	6.3	463	3.9
South	11,974	1,183	9.9	388	3.2	189	4.2	199	2.6
West	12,595	3,904	31.0	1,095	8.7	563	11.9	532	6.8

<sup>1</sup> Respondents were asked if each child in the household spoke a language other than English at home. If they answered “yes,” they were asked how well each could speak English. Categories used for reporting were “very well,” “well,” “not well,” and “not at all.” All those who reported speaking English less than “very well” were considered to have difficulty speaking English.

<sup>2</sup> Percentage of the total population for that particular subgroup. For example, 18.8 percent of all American Indians spoke a language other than English at home and 2.4 percent of all American Indians spoke a language other than English at home and spoke English with difficulty.

<sup>3</sup> Any native language spoken by Asian or Pacific Islanders, which linguists classify variously as Sino-Tibetan, Austroasiatic, or Austronesian languages.

<sup>4</sup> American Indian includes Alaska Native, Black includes African American, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic includes Latino. Race categories exclude Hispanic origin unless specified.

<sup>5</sup> U.S.-born includes all children born in Puerto Rico or other U.S. territories and those born outside of the United States to American citizens.

<sup>6</sup> “Near-poor” is defined as 100–199 percent of the poverty level, and “nonpoor” is defined as at least twice the poverty level. See *supplemental note 1* for more information on poverty.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. A Spanish-language version of the American Community Survey (ACS) was available to respondents. For more information on the ACS, see *supplemental note 3*. For the states in each region, see *supplemental note 1*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey (ACS), 2003, previously unpublished tabulation (January 2005).

## Language Minority School-Age Children

**Table S5. Standard errors for the percentage of 5- to 17-year-olds who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2003**

Language ability	1979	1989	1992	1995	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Spoke a language other than English at home	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.3
Spoke English with difficulty	0.5	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.2

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–2003, previously unpublished tabulation (January 2005).

## Language Minority School-Age Children

**Table S5-1. Standard errors for the number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty: Various years, 1979–2003**

Year	Total population ages 5–17 (in millions)	Spoke a language other than English at home		Spoke English with difficulty		
		Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Number (in millions)	Percent of total population	Percent of those who spoke a language other than English at home
1979	†	0.06	0.53	0.04	0.53	1.21
1989	†	0.09	0.58	0.05	0.61	1.18
1992	†	0.10	0.55	0.06	0.57	1.08
1995	†	0.10	0.52	0.06	0.55	1.02
1999	†	0.12	0.53	0.07	0.57	0.87
2000	†	0.18	0.34	0.13	0.26	1.30
2001	†	0.17	0.32	0.13	0.25	1.24
2002	†	0.22	0.41	0.13	0.25	1.18
2003	†	0.18	0.33	0.13	0.24	1.15
Percentage change compared with 1979						
1979	†	†	†	†	†	†
1989	†	3.23	11.31	5.94	36.54	4.95
1992	†	3.77	11.59	6.96	37.40	4.79
1995	†	3.88	11.97	7.31	40.53	4.75
1999	†	5.01	13.70	8.09	39.64	3.96
2000	†	6.23	13.81	12.45	38.59	4.93
2001	†	6.19	14.04	12.08	37.84	4.67
2002	†	7.19	14.38	12.13	37.20	4.54
2003	†	6.35	14.22	11.90	38.41	4.53

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), 1979 and 1989 November Supplement and 1992, 1995, and 1999 October Supplement and American Community Survey (ACS), 2000–2003, previously unpublished tabulation (January 2005).

## Language Minority School-Age Children

**Table S5-2.** Standard errors for the number and percentage of children ages 5–17 who spoke a language other than English at home and who spoke English with difficulty, by selected characteristics: 2003

[In thousands]									
Characteristic	Number	Spoke a language other than English at home		Spoke English with difficulty					
		Number	Percent of population	Total		Ages 5–9		Ages 10–17	
				Number	Percent of population	Number	Percent of population	Number	Percent of population
<b>Total</b>	†	<b>62.6</b>	<b>0.11</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>0.12</b>	<b>24.5</b>	<b>0.07</b>
Language spoken at home									
Spanish	†	55.6	†	31.3	0.37	22.7	0.65	21.5	0.44
Other Indo-European	†	19.6	†	10.2	0.79	6.6	1.45	7.8	0.93
Asian/Pacific Islander	†	23.9	†	12.5	0.68	8.7	1.21	9.0	0.81
Other	†	7.6	†	2.5	1.90	1.8	3.77	1.7	2.06
Race/ethnicity									
American Indian	†	5.8	1.24	1.7	0.42	1.1	0.73	1.4	0.51
Asian/Pacific Islander	†	21.2	0.66	11.2	0.53	7.9	0.97	8.0	0.62
Black	†	13.9	0.17	7.2	0.09	4.5	0.15	5.7	0.11
White	†	22.5	0.07	11.7	0.04	7.5	0.06	9.0	0.04
Hispanic	†	54.0	0.32	30.4	0.29	22.3	0.50	20.6	0.34
Mexican	†	46.0	0.39	26.6	0.37	19.8	0.63	17.8	0.43
Puerto Rican	†	15.3	1.09	6.3	0.65	4.3	1.10	4.6	0.79
Cuban	†	7.6	1.97	3.4	1.56	2.7	3.05	2.2	1.64
Central or South American	†	21.7	0.73	12.1	0.91	8.3	1.54	8.7	1.12
Other	†	11.1	1.10	5.2	0.67	3.9	1.22	3.4	0.75
Citizenship									
U.S.-born	†	55.4	0.10	27.7	0.05	21.3	0.11	17.8	0.06
Naturalized U.S. citizen	†	10.6	1.28	5.4	1.06	2.6	2.52	4.7	1.16
Non-U.S. citizen	†	30.0	0.42	21.3	0.72	13.4	1.34	16.5	0.84
Poverty status									
Poor	†	33.3	0.35	20.9	0.25	15.4	0.44	14.2	0.29
Near poor	†	37.2	0.28	20.9	0.18	15.1	0.33	14.5	0.21
Nonpoor	†	39.7	0.12	18.1	0.06	12.3	0.10	13.3	0.06
Region									
Northeast	†	27.5	0.26	15.0	0.15	10.3	0.28	10.9	0.18
Midwest	†	37.0	0.18	20.5	0.11	14.5	0.20	14.5	0.12
South	†	20.7	0.16	11.9	0.10	8.6	0.19	8.1	0.11
West	†	41.0	0.27	21.8	0.17	16.0	0.32	14.8	0.18

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey (ACS), 2003, previously unpublished tabulation (January 2005).